

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 439

By Finney L

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Mayor Charles H. Farmer of Jackson on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those citizens who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm throughout their years of public service; and

WHEREAS, a former journalist and county attorney, Charles H. Farmer is one such estimable citizen who has served with distinction since 1989, as the Mayor of Jackson; however, he will soon be taking a much deserved retirement; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Farmer was at the helm during Jackson's stratospheric rise to economic dominance of the West Tennessee area east of metropolitan Memphis; he was overwhelmingly re-elected to four-year terms in 1991, 1995, 1999, and 2003; and

WHEREAS, during Mayor Farmer's illustrious tenure, Jackson has grown from a population of 49,000 to 62,000 people, with 5,500 new homes, 131 extra subdivisions, and thirty-three additional major road projects; and

WHEREAS, the city's economic engine has been fueled by the creation of 6,000 new jobs, thirty-four new industries, and twenty-seven new retail developments; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Bethel College with a degree in history, Charles Farmer became a newspaperman; he worked as a bureau chief for *The Commercial Appeal* and as a bureau chief for a Paris radio station; and

WHEREAS, he then started weekly newspapers at Paris and Camden and went into the insurance business while working toward a law degree from the Nashville School of Law; and

WHEREAS, after receiving his law degree in 1983, Charles Farmer went into private practice and eventually became the Madison County attorney, before running for Mayor of Jackson in 1988; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Farmer was instrumental in consolidating two school systems and various city and county services, as well as renovating downtown Jackson; the new downtown façade included the Ned R. McWherter West Tennessee Cultural Arts Center, as well as a new city hall, county criminal justice complex, and federal courthouse; and

WHEREAS, as a result of his hard work and vision in brokering a partnership to build an urban interchange on Interstate 40 per capita income has grown 43% and city revenues have increased 54%, county revenues 134%, and school revenues 101%; and

WHEREAS, a dedicated public servant, Mayor Farmer was responsible for luring the profitable NAIA women's college basketball tournament, as well as the West Tennessee Diamond Jaxx baseball team, to Jackson; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to accolades, Mayor Farmer has been honored as the Jackson Exchange Club's Man of the Year, received the Boy's and Girl's Club's Man in Youth Award, and has been chosen as the Tennessee Municipal League's Mayor of the Year; and

WHEREAS, he has lent his time and talents to the Tennessee Municipal League (TML) serving in a variety of positions, including board member, vice president, and president; he has also served on the board of directors of the TML Risk Management Pool and is past chairman of the board of the Tennessee Municipal Bond Fund; and

WHEREAS, in May of 2003, Jackson was hit by an F4 tornado, causing immense damage to downtown and East Jackson residential area; Mayor Farmer astutely commissioned the Urban Land Institute of Washington, D.C., through a grant from the Economic Development Administration, to utilize citizen input to create a comprehensive recovery and redevelopment strategy; and

WHEREAS, today Mayor Farmer continues to encourage the participation of public, nonprofit, and private organizations in the rebuilding and redevelopment effort of his beloved Jackson; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Charles Farmer exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, his many professional accomplishments aside, Charles Farmer is fortunate to share both love and companionship with his wife, Ondra; children, Ashley and Drew; and grandson, Grant; and

WHEREAS, he is an active and devout member of Aldersgate United Methodist Church, which he serves faithfully; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career in public service, he has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of his colleagues and the Jackson community at large; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we extend to Charles H. Farmer our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in his future endeavors, as we pay tribute to his singular contributions to the City of Jackson as it's Mayor for the past eighteen years.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.